

# 47-thousand workers now contribute to the Social Security Scheme

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**Speakers at opening of 2nd AI Research Conference held at Hodges Bay Club on Sunday night. Hon. Daryll Matthew, Dr. Curtis Charles, Dr. Indrani Baden-Persad, Dr. Stacy Kennedy-Richards and Prof. C Justin Robinson**



# Local News



## 47-thousand workers now contribute to Social Security Scheme



**Prime Minister Gaston Browne speaking on the Browne and Browne show**

Prime Minister Gaston Browne spotlights the current growth in employment that is taking place in the country with figures released from the Social Security Scheme showing that there are some 47-thousand persons contributing to the

scheme on a weekly/monthly basis.

Speaking on the Browne and Browne show on Saturday, PM Browne noted that under the previous UPP administration, contributors to the scheme dwindled to 32,000-contributors, but

under Labour, this number rose to 42,000-persons before the pandemic and now stands at a historic 47,000 contributors.

“This growth confirms not only a robust job market but also one capable of absorbing newcomers to the workforce and immigrant labour,” the prime minister explained.

He emphasized that Antigua and Barbuda currently enjoys near full employment. He noted personal stories, such as a Vincentian immigrant who secured employment within one week of arrival. According to Browne, the few unemployed individuals today either cannot work or are selectively avoiding jobs in sectors like hospitality or security.

According to PM Browne...

Social Security’s fiscal health has significantly improved. Contributions from the private sector alone now generate \$14 million monthly, exceeding the scheme’s \$13 million in obligations - leaving room for modest savings even without government subsidies.

This contrasts sharply with the past. In 2010, a study confirmed the insolvency of the Social Security Scheme. Back then, pensioners queued at dawn in hopes of receiving delayed payments. Under the current administration, backlogs have largely been cleared. Remaining delays are now primarily due to processing times and not funding shortages, with over \$20 million in reserves currently in deposit.

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## PM outlines strategic investment proposal for Social Security

Prime Minister Gaston Browne has outlined a bold investment proposal for a \$75 million investment into Jolly Beach Hotel on behalf of the Social Security Scheme that will stabilize the future of the organization.

The prime minister explained the proposal this way; firstly, the government will wipe off its outstanding arrears to Social Security by floating a bond. Portions of the proceeds from the bond, an estimated \$75 million, it will use to invest into the Jolly Beach Hotel, one of the leading hotels in the country and already a profitable enterprise.

He further explained that Social Security Schemes around the world cannot rely solely on deductions from contributors to pay pension and other benefits because in many cases the number of pensioners is growing faster than the number of contributors. Additionally, it usually takes a ratio of ten contributors to one pensioner which is the worldwide recommended standard. Antigua and Barbuda has never attained that benchmark.

Consequently, PM Browne said it is important for the Scheme to invest in profitable enterprises to ensure its long-term viability.

Despite criticism from former UPP Political Leader, Harold Lovell, the prime minister's proposal is attracting support from several quarters, including the publication of a recent Letter to the editor by an anonymous onlooker.



**Aireal view of the Jolly Beach Hotel**

### Key highlights from the letter:

- Jolly Beach currently earns over US\$1.5 million annually in its underdeveloped state.
- With upgrades and competent management, this figure could double to US\$3 million, creating 'a steady revenue stream' for Social Security.
- The move 'diversifies' Social Security's portfolio away from 'underperforming bank deposits'.
- It creates 'jobs, boosts tourism', and promotes national economic resilience.

According to Browne, Lovell has mischaracterized the project as a reckless move that endangers pension funds. The Prime Minister rebuffed this narrative, explaining that the investment

is meant to 'generate sustainable revenue' to support long-term pension payouts and revitalize a critical tourism asset.

He accused Lovell of 'willful distortion' for political gain and dismissed his economic credibility. Citing Lovell's record as finance minister, PM Browne noted that under his tenure:

- Antigua and Barbuda 'lost 25% of its economy' between 2009 and 2014.
- Recovery 'never materialized', and the collapse could not be blamed solely on the global crisis.
- Poor financial judgment led to 'massive personal and national failures'.



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## APUA forms internal strategic committee to chart its future in light of growing competition



**Chief Executive Officer, John Bradshaw**

APUA has established an internal strategic committee with the goal of charting the future course of the organization in order for it to remain relevant in an increasingly competitive environment.

Chief Executive Officer, John Bradshaw, made the announcement Friday as the organization launched its annual Summer Internship Programme.

Bradshaw said APUA currently provides three key services to consumers in Antigua and Barbuda; telecommunications, water and electricity. He noted that APUA currently controls 25 percent share of the telecommunications market and that he has



**APUA senior management team in front row**



**APUA summer Interns 2025**

asked the Telecoms Unit to work assiduously towards attaining a 30 percent market share.

“In order to achieve this goal, we need the intellectual capital to compete and the innovation to move us from a market of 25 per-

cent share to 30 percent share. In addition to that is the whole issue of our traditional services of water and electricity that are being challenged. For example, there is renewable energy challenging us so the Electricity Business Unit must step up its game. It must be innovative and use innovation in a way to compete as consumers can turn to providing their own electricity utilizing solar energy," he stated.

According to Bradshaw, APUA must now position itself to be the market leader in that service as well.

Recognising the changing landscape, Bradshaw said APUA is taking bold steps to meet the growing competition to all its services while charting the future for the organization.

"In recent times, we at APUA formed a committee called Strategy, Technology and Innovation Committee comprising the senior management team as well as the senior technical persons at the level just below the management team. The whole idea is to develop products and services with innovation by utilizing Artificial Intelligence and other technologies so that APUA can compete in the marketplace," he reported. The CEO said the new committee has been challenged with a mandate to 'develop the products and services so that we can beat our competitors and remain relevant in the marketplace'.

Additionally, Bradshaw said

there is an ongoing process of 'changing the culture' of APUA to one that recognizes that the current business environment is a constantly evolving process and that APUA has to continue to build capacity in its intellectual and human resources in order to be competitive. "Buying hardware and software will not

cut it; the human creativity and ability to adopt to any situation is what will make us competitive and relevant," he declared.

He said the internship programme helps APUA transition from one generation to the next and that this is 'very important' for APUA's survival.



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Send nominations to [unsungheroes@cibcfib.com](mailto:unsungheroes@cibcfib.com) on or before **July 31, 2025.**

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## 49-year old male is the country's latest road fatality

The police have launched an investigation into a fatal traffic accident that occurred in the early hours of Sunday morning, along the Sir Sidney Walling Highway in the vicinity of the North Sound Bridge.

Reports reaching the police indicate that the driver – Luis Jose Vargas Ramon, 49, of North Sound – was driving his vehicle along with a passenger when he apparently fell asleep at the wheel and ran off the road.

Initial reports indicate that the vehicle plunged into the water near the bridge. Emergency personnel responded to the scene and found Ramon unresponsive inside the vehicle. He was pronounced dead at 9:07 a.m.

The other occupant of the vehicle was receiving medical attention at the SLBMC up to yesterday.

Police are still at the scene carrying out further investigations into the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Anyone with information that may assist in the investigation is asked to contact the Parham Police Station at 463-2060.

Further updates will be provided as the investigation progresses.



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# Police investigate sudden death of French national



The police are continuing investigations into the circumstances surrounding the sudden death of a French national.

Police officers attached to the Gray's Farm Police Station responded to a report of a sudden at Galley Bay Heights on Saturday, and discovered the lifeless body of a female inside her property.

The deceased arrived in Antigua on 16 January 2025.

Preliminary examinations revealed no signs of foul play; however, a complete investigation will be conducted. The body was removed to a funeral home pending a postmortem examination.

The investigation remains ongoing.



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## AT&LU concludes new agreement with the Central Marketing Corporation (CMC)



# CENTRAL MARKETING CORPORATION

The Antigua Trades and Labour Union (AT&LU) is reporting that it has successfully concluded negotiation with the Central Marketing Corporation (CMC) on behalf of employees at the statutory body.

The union said an agreement between it and CMC was signed on Friday at the Office of the Antigua and Barbuda Employer's Federation in respect to terms and conditions of employment for line staff represented by the Union.

"Through this signed agreement the line staff will benefit from a ten percent (10%) wage increase. At the time of signing, workers would have already benefitted from the retroactive pay associated with the wage increase and also the implementation of the new rates of pay," the AT&LU said in a press statement.

According to the release in the first quarter of 2023 the line staff received a six percent (6%) covering the period 2019-2021. Though negotiations were protracted as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic the AT&LU was still able to successfully secure increases for those years. The most recent wage increase of ten percent (10%) covers the period 2022-2024.

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## Scouts Association initiates leadership training programme



**Group photo of participants and Scout leaders with WOSM Consultants Laura Baldassari and Luis Gonzales at Camp Blizzard.**



**WOSM Consultant Laura Baldassari of Uruguay receives a token of appreciation from Young Scout Leader Tarik Mussington of the Antigua and Barbuda Scout Association.**

The Antigua and Barbuda National Scout Association officially hosted a Scouts Leadership Training Programme at the Conference Centre,



**WOSM Consultant Luis Gonzales of Ecuador receives a token of thanks from Young Scout Leader Tarik Mussington for his role in the leadership training.**

Camp Blizzard, Headquarters of the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force (ABDF).

The event marked a significant step forward in building leadership capac-

ity within the organization. The activity is supported by the virtual presence of Governor General and Chief Scout, Sir Rodney Williams, who addressed the opening exercises speaking from England, the birthplace of the Scouting movement.

The training brought together 24 participants, including existing Scout Leaders and individuals who have volunteered to serve as future leaders. The sessions were facilitated by two experienced World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) Consultants:

- Laura Baldassari of Uruguay, an educator and expert in the Safe from Harm programme, who works with a Montevideo-based NGO focused on youth development; and
- Luis Gonzales of Ecuador, a former National Chief Commissioner with eight years of national service and expertise in the Global Support Assessment Tool (GSAT).

In his virtual address, Sir Rodney commended the initiative and emphasized the need to create a culture of safety, service, and integrity in Scouting. "Let this training be a catalyst—not just for personal growth, but for strengthening the movement in Antigua and Barbuda," he said. He thanked the international consultants for their generous commitment and expertise.

Chief Commissioner Patricia Salmon expressed her satisfaction with the training outcomes and the quality of engagement from the facilitators. "We are truly grateful to Laura and Luis for their energy, insights, and professionalism. Their contributions have been invaluable," she said. "We also thank our Chief Scout for his consistent support of youth and volunteer development."

The training focused on equipping leaders with tools to foster youth protection, strengthen organizational accountability, and uphold the values of the global Scouting movement.



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## Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to upgrade the skills of its



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to upgrade the skills of its Volunteer Corps with the completion of a course in Spanish.

The course was conducted at the Venezuelan Institute for Culture and Cooperation (IVCC), located in the capital city of St. John's.

It was conceived by the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Karen Cabral and coordinated by the Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Carmen Velásquez de Visbal.

During a recent graduation exercise, Ambassador Velásquez congratulated

the IVCC professors and this special group of students composed by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and volunteers who frequently support international activities hosted in this twin-island nation.

The Deputy Permanent Secretary Cabral, thanked Ambassador Velásquez for her receptiveness and the support of the Venezuelan government in turning this idea into a reality, which culminated in its first stage. She

also encouraged the students to continue this path of learning Spanish, which will undoubtedly open up a world of personal and professional opportunities.

Finally, the students demonstrated their progress and mastery of the Spanish language through readings, compositions, songs, and other cultural activities.

Approximately 40 individuals participated in the training course.





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*Speaker*

**PRIME MINISTER GASTON BROWNE**



*Speaker*

**PROFESSOR C. JUSTIN ROBINSON**



# Local News



## Police recover suspected stole vehicles and cannabis plants in Freetown



The police have recovered several vehicles suspected to have been stolen, along with a quantity of cannabis plants, during a recent operation in the Freetown area.

At approximately 8:15 a.m. on Saturday, June 21, a team of police officers conducted a search operation at Freetown and discovered eight (8) vehicles of various makes and models hidden in a bushy area. Several of the vehicles were completely stripped of their parts. The police also seized a quantity of cannabis plants found growing in the area.

The vehicles, along with the controlled substance were transported to Police Headquarters as part of an ongoing investigation.

The police are urging anyone with information that may assist in the investigations to contact the Criminal Investigations Department at 462-3913 or call Crimestoppers at 800-TIPS (8477).

The Royal Police Force remains committed to reducing criminal activity and ensuring the safety and security of all residents and visitors.

*In more police news*, two individuals are currently in police custody assisting with investigations into the unlawful possession of a

firearm and ammunition.

At approximately 7:15 a.m. on Saturday, June 21, police officers executed a search warrant at a property in Yorks and found two occupants on the premises. During the search, the police discovered one firearm with several matching rounds of ammunition, and camouflage clothing.

The items were seized and taken to the police station for further in-

vestigation. Both individuals were arrested and are being questioned in connection with the discovery. Investigations into the matter are ongoing.

The Police Administration continues to urge members of the public to report any suspicious activity by contacting the Criminal Investigations Department at 462-3913 or Crimestoppers at 800-TIPS (8477).



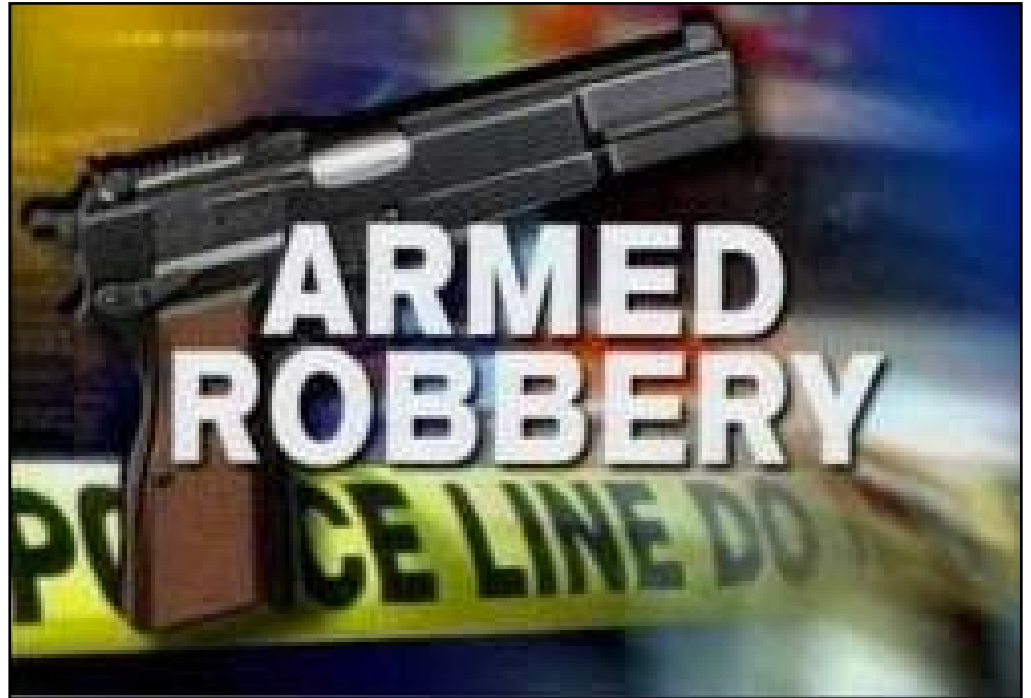
## Two men have been charged with aggravated robbery

The police have arrested and charged Wayne Thomas of Buckleys and Je-vaughn Josiah of Seatons - in connection with an aggravated robbery that occurred at Jabberwock Beach.

Both men are accused of robbing two individuals of a vehicle on Sunday, June 15. The stolen vehicle was later recovered by police in the Freetown area.

Josiah appeared before the court on Friday, June 20, and was remanded to His Majesty's Prison until September 3, 2025. Wayne Thomas is expected to appear in court sometime during this week.

Anyone with additional information surrounding the ongoing investigation is asked to contact the Parham Police Station at 463-2060, the Crim-



inal Investigations Department at TIPS (8477). 462-3913, or Crimestoppers at 800-



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In the heart of tiny islands where the ocean calls,  
 Rise voices of change from schools and halls.  
 Children once silent now boldly proclaim,  
 “We are the climate heroes — remember our name!”



From chalkboards to recycling bins they march,  
 Under sun-soaked skies and banyan's arch.  
 Lunchboxes packed, not plastic but steel,  
 Learning to live with the planet's zeal.

"Reduce, Reuse!" the posters shout,  
 Students plant trees and clean streams out.  
 Cans and bottles, once tossed in haste,  
 Now sorted, weighed — nothing to waste.

Each bottle tells a story grim,  
 Of coral choked and waters dim.  
 But hands so small, with hearts so wide,  
 Lift each burden with youthful pride.



At Ottos, Clarehall, PM, and All Saints,  
 The warriors come in eco-paints.  
 Bright Hack winners and term top schools,  
 Redefining cool with climate rules.



Every hallway hums with change,  
 Their science projects bold and strange:  
 Solar cars from bottle caps,  
 Windmills spinning recycled scraps.

The bell rings loud, but not just for class,  
 It signals the shift that's come to pass.  
 From plastic tales of past despair,  
 To halls of hope and future care.

From climate clubs to service teams,  
 These halls now echo future dreams.  
 Of compost heaps and garden beds,  
 Of action plans and solar sheds.

But it's not just projects, grades, or gold —  
 It's values deep and courage bold.  
 To speak, to act, to take a stand,  
 To heal this scarred and weeping land.



Now classrooms double as labs of light,  
 Where wrongs are righted through student  
 might.  
 Their tales aren't fiction, fable, or gloss —  
 They're daily proof of youth as boss.

For in these schools, there's more than  
 books,  
 There's purpose in their daily looks.  
 They dream of justice, green and fair,  
 And act like the future's already there.



So here's a rhyme, a call, a cry —  
 From plastic piles that touched the sky.  
 To students who said, "Enough's enough!"  
 And proved that even small is tough.

No cape, no wand, no magic potion,  
 Just grit, resolve, and a true emotion.  
 Their halls are brave, their schools alive —  
 In climate's race, they strive, they drive.

From tales of plastic to rhymes of resolve,  
 These youth are the mystery we all must  
 solve.  
 For if in their hands the future lies,  
 Then we must support, not criticize.

So listen close, heed their calls —  
 From classroom floors to assembly halls.  
 They're climate conscious, proud and tall —  
 Writing tomorrow with no fear at all.



# Regional News



## US: Former Haitian mayor jailed for nine years for lying about past involvement in political violence

The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) on Friday said a former Mayor of Les Irois, Haiti, has been sentenced to nine years in prison followed by three years of supervised release.

Jean Morose Viliena was sentenced on Friday by Chief Judge F. Dennis Saylor IV for the District of Massachusetts for “possessing and using a Permanent Resident Card he had fraudulently obtained by falsely stating that he had not ordered, carried out, or materially assisted in extrajudicial and political killings and other acts of violence against the Haitian people.”

A US federal jury convicted Viliena in March 2025 of three counts of visa fraud.

“In Haiti, Jean Morose Viliena was involved in the violent killings, beatings, and assaults of whomever he believed threatened his power as mayor,” said Matthew R. Galeotti, Head of the Justice Department’s Criminal Division.

“His lies to US immigration authorities allowed him to unlawfully enter this country and obtain lawful permanent resident status,” he added. “Individuals who commit violent crimes in their home countries should take note: we do not tolerate human rights abusers who lie to take refuge here.

“We will find you, investigate you, and prosecute you to ensure that you are held accountable to the maximum extent of US law for your heinous criminal conduct,” Galeotti continued.

US Attorney Leah B. Foley for the District of Massachusetts said that “Jean Morose Viliena built a life in the United States by burying the truth about his violent past – a past marked by political persecution, bloodshed and the silencing of dissent in Haiti.



“For more than a decade, he lived freely and comfortably in this country while the victims of his brutality lived in fear, exile and pain,” Foley said. “Today’s sentence brings a measure of justice for the lives he shattered and sends a clear message: the United States will not be a safe haven for human rights abusers.

“Lying to gain entry into this country and then lying again under oath to avoid accountability strikes at the heart of our immigration and legal systems,” she added. “I commend the tremendous courage of the victims and witnesses who stood up and spoke the truth despite the risks and made this outcome possible.”

Special Agent in Charge Michael J.

Krol of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) New England said Friday’s sentencing “underscores the commitment of Homeland Security Investigations to ensuring that individuals who commit heinous acts of violence and fraud are held accountable, regardless of where those crimes were committed.

“Jean Morose Viliena’s actions were not only a gross violation of human rights but also a betrayal of the trust placed in him by his community,” he said. “HSI will continue to work tirelessly with our partners to bring justice to victims and protect the American people from foreign criminals seeking to escape justice in their home coun-



# Regional News

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tries.”

The DOJ said Viliena, 53, was the Mayor of Les Irois, Haiti, from December 2006 until February 2010.

As a candidate and as mayor, the DOJ said Viliena was backed by Korega, “a political machine that used armed violence to exert power throughout the southwestern region of Haiti.

“Viliena personally supervised his mayoral staff and other armed supporters aligned with Korega and directed them to engage in armed violence to quash opposition to his authority,” the DOJ said.

According to evidence presented at trial, on July 27, 2007, Viliena “violently retaliated against an activist who had previously spoken at a judicial proceeding on behalf of a neighbor whom Viliena had assaulted.”

“In a brutal act of reprisal, that evening, Viliena led an armed group to the activist’s home, where Viliena and his associates shot and killed the activist’s younger brother and then smashed the brother’s skull with a large rock before a crowd of bystanders,” the DOJ said.

It said Viliena committed another act of violent retribution in April 2008, when he and his associates attacked community members who had founded a radio station that Viliena opposed.

According to multiple witnesses’ testimony, Viliena mobilized armed members of his staff and supporters to forcibly shut down the radio station and seize its broadcasting equipment.

The DOJ said Viliena distributed firearms to his men, some of whom also carried machetes and picks.

According to the evidence presented at trial, during this incident, Viliena beat one man and ordered an associate to shoot him when he tried to flee.

As a result, the man’s leg was later amputated above the knee, the DOJ said.

It said Viliena also beat a student who

was at the radio station; “when the student tried to flee, a bullet struck his face, leaving him permanently blind in one eye.”

Less than two months after the radio station attack, the DOJ said “Viliena presented himself at the US Embassy Consular Office in Port au Prince, Haiti, where he applied for a visa to enter the United States.”

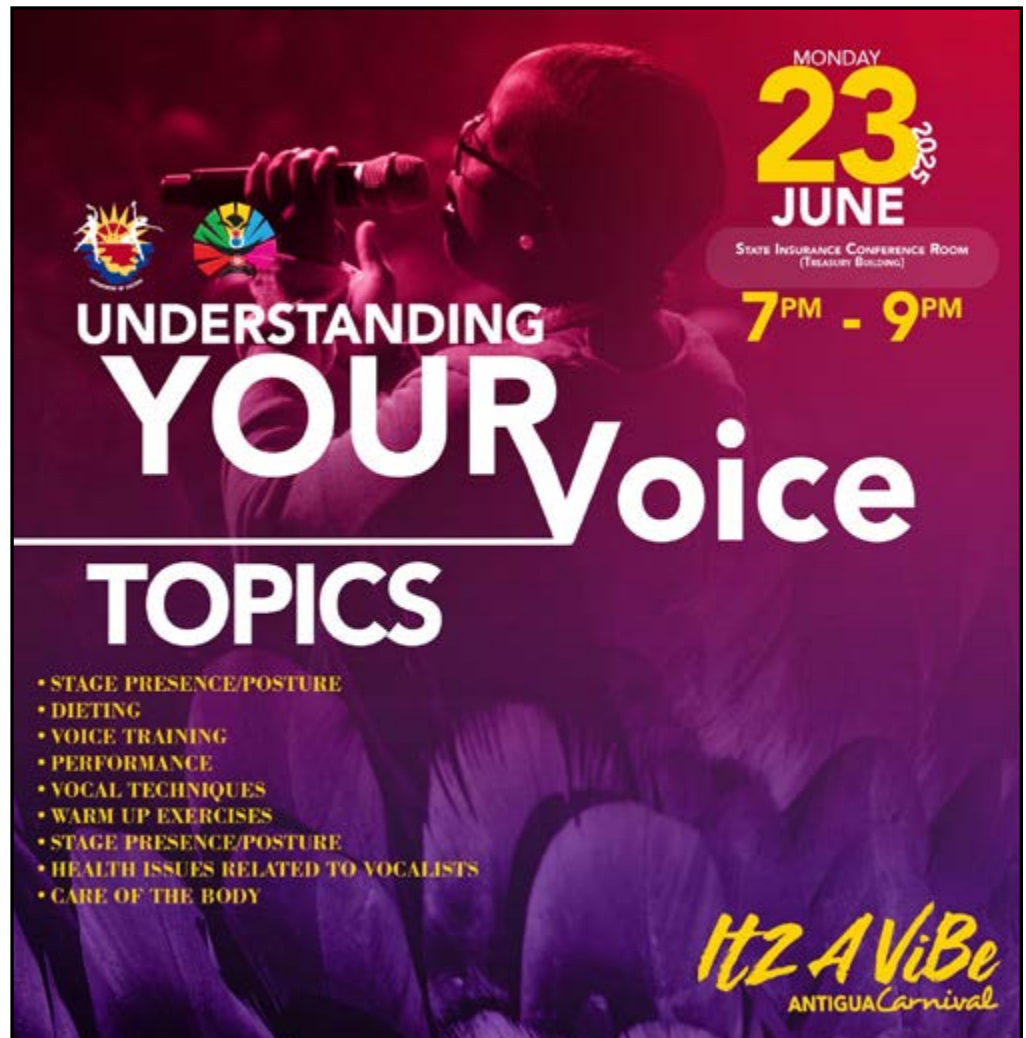
The DOJ said the visa application specifically requires an applicant to state whether they are a member of any class of individuals excluded from admission into the United States, including those who have “ordered, carried out or materially assisted in extrajudicial and political killings and other acts of violence against the Haitian people.”

The DOJ said Viliena falsely responded “no,” indicating that this category did not apply to him.

“Viliena thereafter swore to and affirmed before a US Consular Officer that the contents of the application were true and signed the application,” the DOJ said.

Based on Viliena’s false representations, the DOJ said the United States approved his visa application and permitted him to enter the country.

The DOJ said the United States later granted Viliena lawful permanent resident status and a Permanent Resident Card, also known as a “Green Card.” “For years, through the use of his fraudulently obtained Green Card, Viliena enjoyed a job; sufficient income; a comfortable home; a safe community; the ability to visit his family in Les Irois at any time; and the privilege of raising and educating a son who is now a US citizen by birth,” the DOJ said. (*Loop Caribbean*)



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- CARE OF THE BODY

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# Regional News



## CDB welcomes Canada's multi-million dollar guarantee at G7 summit



The Barbados-based Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has welcomed the announcement by Canada that it is providing a portfolio guarantee of up to US\$200 million to the region's premier financial institution.

The announcement is part of Canada's broader G7 initiative to drive innovative financing at multilateral development banks, dedicating up to US\$400 million in portfolio guarantees to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and CDB. This funding is anticipated to unlock up to US\$1.6 billion in new development financing to address challenges across Latin America and the Caribbean.

The CDB said that Ottawa made the announcement at the recently held G7 summit in Canada and a "transformative milestone in expanding development financing for the Caribbean.

"The initiative bolsters CDB's capacity to deliver essential support to its Borrowing Member Countries (BMC) while reinforcing the bank's financial resilience and enhancing its capital optimisation," the CDB said.

It said that the portfolio guarantee is expected to play a catalytic role in optimising CDB's balance sheet, freeing up substantial risk capital and increasing lending headroom to advance development solu-

tions across the region.

"Canada's support is a game-changer for the bank and the region. The portfolio guarantee reflects the transformative potential of partnerships and financial innovation to drive meaningful development outcomes," said CDB's president, Daniel Best.

"This initiative will expand our lending capacity to address the critical needs of our Borrowing Member Countries while reinforcing the bank's financial strength and reputation. We are incredibly grateful to Canada for their leadership and confidence in CDB, and we look forward to delivering on the promise of this partnership for the people of the

Caribbean," he added.

CDB said that this initiative aligns with its Balance Sheet Optimisation (BSO) programme, which seeks to adopt innovative financial instruments inspired by other multilateral development banks to protect credit ratings and increase development lending.

Supported by Canada's leadership and funding, this initiative also complements CDB's efforts to leverage innovative mechanisms such as portfolio guarantees and exposure exchange agreements to achieve a greater financial impact.

The CDB said that it also commends Canada's strategic leadership as G7 President, prioritizing impactful development solutions for emerging markets and fostering global partnerships in support of sustainable development.

"This commitment underscores Canada's dedication to advancing the economic resilience of small island developing states and their communities," the CDB said, adding that it remains confident in the tangible benefits this partnership will deliver, empowering the region to address pressing environmental, social, and economic needs while ensuring long-term financial sustainability. (*Loop Caribbean*)



## CARICOM calls for ceasefire in Gaza, de-escalation of Israel-Iran conflict



The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR) is calling for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in Gaza amid what it describes as a worsening humanitarian crisis marked by a soaring civilian death toll and blocked access to food and aid.

In a statement issued Saturday, COFCOR said it was “deeply disturbed” by the situation in Gaza and the “alarming tensions across the Middle East, which threaten global stability”.

“COFCOR deplores the immense suffering and tragic loss of civilian lives, especially women and children, in Gaza, with more deaths every day and a continued inability to access food and humanitarian assistance. The bombardment and deprivation of basic necessities violate international humanitarian law.

“We condemn all violence against ci-

vilians, including the attacks of October 7, 2023, and the taking of hostages. We equally condemn the disproportionate military response and actions that contravene international law, as well as the continued expansion of illegal settlements,” the regional foreign ministers said.

Reaffirming CARICOM’s support for a two-state solution as the only viable path to a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians, in line with United Nations Security Council resolutions, the ministers urged an end to the attacks.

“COFCOR calls for an immediate, unconditional, and sustained ceasefire in Gaza, urging all parties to ensure safe humanitarian access and the immediate release of all hostages and administrative detainees,” it stated.

COFCOR also raised alarms over the growing threat of regional escalation, particularly following direct military

confrontations between Israel and Iran.

According to the CARICOM body, these developments pose a threat to regional and global peace and security.

“The COFCOR stresses the urgent need for de-escalation, restraint, and the avoidance of retaliatory actions to prevent a wider conflict. We call on all actors to exercise maximum diplomatic efforts to facilitate a durable solution to the concerns of the parties,” it said in its statement.

Calling on the international community to redouble efforts for a peaceful resolution through dialogue and negotiation, COFCOR said it remains committed to working with global partners to forge a durable solution that respects the security, sovereignty and aspirations of all peoples in the Middle East. (*Jamaica Gleaner*)

## Hot-air balloon in Brazil catches fire and falls from the sky, killing 8 and injuring 13

A hot-air balloon caught fire and tumbled from the sky on Saturday in Brazil's southern state of Santa Catarina, killing eight people, firefighters said.

Footage shared by local news outlet G1 showed billows of smoke coming from the balloon, which was in flames as it hurtled toward the ground in the municipality of Praia Grande.

On a video on social media, two people can be seen falling through the air as the fire spread on-board the aircraft.

Thirteen people survived and were taken to hospitals, Santa Catarina's military fire brigade said, adding that 21 people were on board including the pilot.

The crash happened at around 8am local time, said Lt Col Zevir Cipriano Jr., a military firefighter. A fire started in the basket, prompting the pilot to try to land the balloon.

Thirteen people, including the pilot, managed to jump out but eight were unable to. Without the weight of the others, the balloon began rising again.

"These people ended up dying — four charred and another four jumped out of the balloon when it was falling," Cipriano Jr. said.



Three people died hugging each other, said Ulisses Gabriel, chief of Santa Catarina's civil police force, on X. "It hurts the soul."

"We are in mourning. A tragedy has happened. We will see how it unfolds, what happened, why it happened. But the important thing now is for the state structure to do what it can," Gov Jorginho Mello said in a video on X.

Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva expressed his solidarity with victims' families and said he was placing the federal government at the disposal of victims and local authorities.

Authorities have opened an investigation, and the results will be made public within 30 days, Santa Catarina's public safety

secretary Col Flávio Graff told journalists. According to the civil police, the pilot has given testimony and they will also gather statements from survivors, Graff added.

G1 reported that the balloon's expected flight time was 45 minutes, with the balloon reaching 1,000 meters (3,280 feet), and cost 550 reais (around \$100) per passenger.

Sobrevoar, the company responsible for the multicolored balloon, said it complied with all regulations and had a clean accident record prior to Saturday.

"Despite all necessary precautions and the efforts of our pilot — who has extensive experience and followed all recommended procedures in an at-

tempt to save everyone on board the balloon — we are suffering from the pain caused by this tragedy," it said in a statement.

Sobrevoar added that it was suspending all operations for an indefinite period.

Praia Grande is a common destination for hot-air ballooning, a popular activity in parts of southern Brazil. The area is famous for its dramatic canyon landscapes and is known as the "Brazilian Cappadocia," a reference to a region in central Turkey famed worldwide for stunning hot-air balloon rides.

Last Sunday, a balloon came down in Sao Paulo state, killing a 27-year-old woman and injuring 11 other people, G1 reported. (*Loop Caribbean*)



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## Suicide bombing at Damascus church kills 22, Syrian authorities say

At least 22 people have been killed and 63 others wounded in a suicide bomb attack at a church in Damascus, Syria's health ministry has said.

A man opened fire with a weapon at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Prophet Elias in the Dweila neighbourhood during a service on Sunday evening before detonating an explosive vest, according to the interior ministry.

It said the attacker was affiliated with the jihadist group Islamic State (IS). There was no immediate claim from the group itself.

Photos and video from inside the church showed a heavily damaged altar, pews covered in broken glass and blood splattered across the walls.

Witness Lawrence Maamari told AFP news agency that "someone entered [the church] from outside carrying a weapon" and began shooting. People "tried to stop him before he blew himself up", he added.

Another man who was in a nearby shop said he heard gunfire followed by an explosion that sent glass flying. "We saw fire in the church and the remains of wooden benches thrown all the way to the entrance," Ziad said.

It was the first such attack in Damascus since Islamist-led rebel forces overthrew Bashar al-Assad in December, ending 13 years of devastating civil war.

The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch said in a statement: "The treacherous hand of evil struck this evening, claiming our lives, along with the lives of our loved ones who fell today as martyrs during the evening divine liturgy."

According to initial information, the bomb blast occurred at the entrance to the church, resulting in the deaths of people who were both inside the building and in the immediate vicinity, it added.

The patriarchate called upon Syria's interim authorities to "assume full responsibility for what has happened



and continues to happen in terms of violation against the sanctity of churches, and to ensure the protection of all citizens".

Interior Minister Anas Khattab said specialised teams from his ministry had begun investigating the circumstances of what he called a "reprehensible crime".

"These terrorist acts will not stop the efforts of the Syrian state in achieving civil peace," he added.

The office of UN special envoy for Syria, Geir Pedersen, condemned the attack and urged Syrians "to unite in rejecting terrorism, extremism, incitement and the targeting of any community".

US special envoy Tom Barrack said: "These terrible acts of cowardice have no place in the new tapestry of integrated tolerance and inclusion that Syrians are weaving."

Interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa - whose Sunni Islamist group, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), is a former al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria and is designated as a terrorist organisation by the UN, US and UK - has repeatedly promised to protect religious and ethnic minorities. However, Syria has been rocked by two waves of deadly sectarian violence in recent months.

IS has frequently targeted Christians

and other religious minorities in Syria. In 2016, the group claimed a series of blasts near the Shia Muslim Sayyida Zeinab shrine in a southern suburb of Damascus, which killed more than 70 people.

IS once held 88,000 sq km (34,000 sq miles) of territory stretching from western Syria to eastern Iraq and imposed its brutal rule on almost eight million people.

Despite the group's military defeat in Syria in 2019, the UN has warned that the threat posed by IS and its affiliates remains high.

A report published in February warned that the group might take advantage of the transition in Syria to surge attacks and make the country a renewed hub for recruiting foreign fighters.

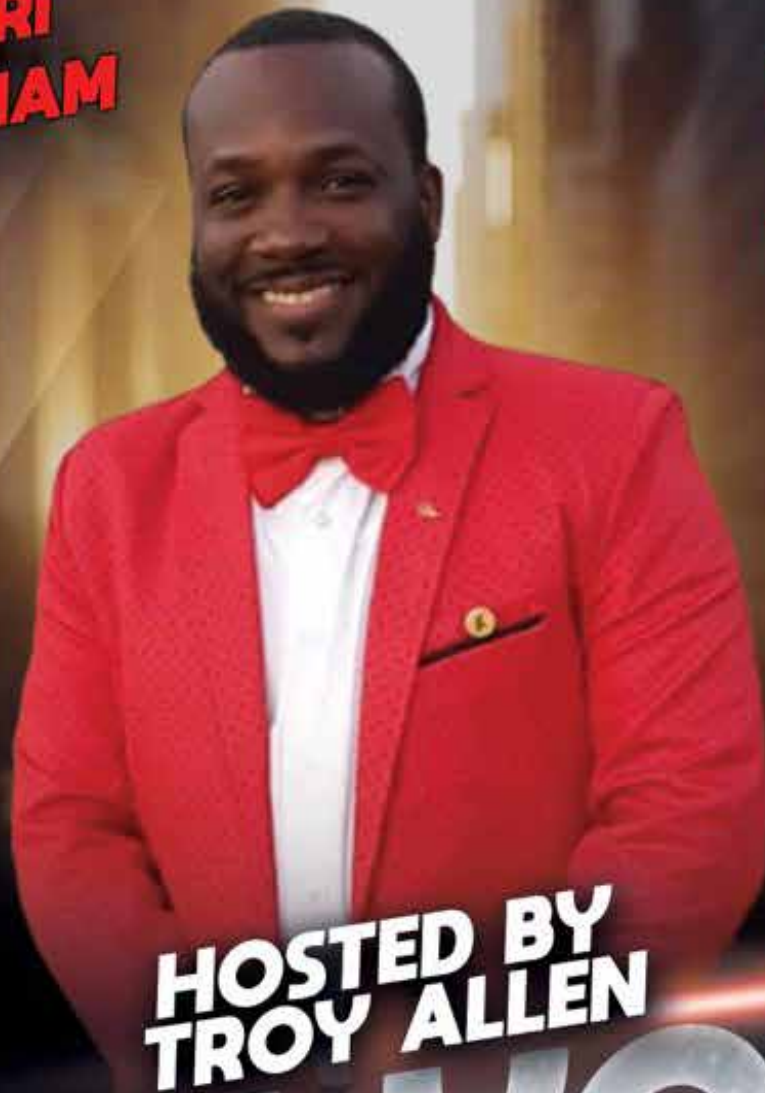
It estimated that IS had between 1,500 and 3,000 fighters in Syria and neighbouring Iraq, with most of them, including key leaders, based in Syrian territory. About 300 fighters were based in the central Badia desert, which served as a centre for planning external operations, it said.

More than 9,000 IS fighters are being detained in prisons spread across north-eastern Syria and 40,000 other people linked to IS, mostly women and children, are held in several camps. (BBC News)





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## Nations react to US strikes on Iran with many calling for diplomacy

Several close US allies urged a return to the negotiating table in the wake of American strikes on Iran that fuelled fears of a wider conflict, while noting the threat posed by Tehran's nuclear programme.

Some countries and groups in the region, including those that support Iran, condemned the move while also urging de-escalation.

US President Donald Trump had said Thursday that he would decide within two weeks whether to get involved in Israel's war with Tehran. In the end, it took just days. Washington hit three Iranian nuclear sites early Sunday.

While the amount of damage remained unclear, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the US had "crossed a very big red line," the time for diplomacy was over and Iran had the right to defend itself.

Some have questioned whether a weakened Iran would capitulate or remain defiant and begin striking with allies at US targets scattered across the Gulf region.

Here is a look at reactions from governments and officials around the world.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said he was



"gravely alarmed" by the use of force by the United States.

"There is a growing risk that this conflict could rapidly get out of control — with catastrophic consequences for civilians, the region, and the world," he said in a statement on the social media platform X. "I call on Member States to de-escalate."

"There is no military solution. The only path forward is diplomacy."

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer warned of escalation beyond the Middle East as he called for all sides to negotiate a

diplomatic end to the crisis, saying stability was the priority in the volatile region.

The UK, along with the European Union, France and Germany, tried unsuccessfully to broker a diplomatic solution in Geneva last week with Iran.

Starmer said Iran's nuclear programme posed a grave threat to global security.

"Iran can never be allowed to develop a nuclear weapon and the US has taken action to alleviate that threat," Starmer said.

Dmitry Medvedev, who serves as deputy head of

President Vladimir Putin's Security Council, said several countries were prepared to supply Tehran with nuclear weapons.

He didn't specify which countries, but said the US attack caused minimal damage and would not stop Tehran from pursuing nuclear weapons.

Russia's Foreign Ministry said it "strongly condemned" the airstrikes and called them a "a gross violation of international law, the UN Charter, and UN Security Council resolutions."

The Iraqi government condemned the US strikes,



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saying the military escalation created a grave threat to peace and security in the Middle East. It said it poses serious risks to regional stability and called for diplomatic efforts to de-escalate the crisis.

“The continuation of such attacks risks dangerous escalation with consequences that extend beyond the borders of any single state, threatening the security of the entire region and the world,” government spokesman Bassem al-Awadi said in the statement.

Egypt’s President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi warned of “grave repercussions” for expanding the Middle East conflict and urged a return to negotiations.

Saudi Arabia, which previously condemned Israel’s strikes on Iran’s nucle-

ar facilities and military leaders, expressed “deep concern” about the US airstrikes, but stopped short of condemning them.

“The Kingdom underscores the need to exert all possible efforts to exercise restraint, de-escalate tensions, and avoid further escalation,” the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Qatar, which is home to the largest US military base in the Middle East, said it “regrets” escalating tensions in the Israel-Iran war.

Its Foreign Ministry in a statement urged all parties to show restraint and “avoid escalation, which the peoples of the region, burdened by conflicts and their tragic humanitarian repercussions, cannot tolerate.”

China condemned US strikes on Iran, calling them a serious violation of international law that further inflamed tensions in the Middle East.

In a statement, the Chinese Foreign Ministry urged all parties — especially Israel — to implement a cease-fire and begin dialogue.

“China is willing to work with the international community to pool efforts together and uphold justice, and contribute to the work for restoring peace and stability in the Middle East,” the ministry said.

The European Union’s top diplomat said Iran must not be allowed to develop a nuclear weapon, but she urged those involved in the conflict to show restraint.

“I urge all sides to step back, return to the negotiating table and prevent

further escalation,” EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said in a post on social media.

Pope Leo XIV made a strong appeal for peace during his Sunday Angelus prayer in St Peter’s square, calling for international diplomacy to “silence the weapons.”

After an open reference to the “alarming” situation in Iran, the first American pontiff stressed that “today more than ever, humanity cries out and invokes peace and it is a cry that demands reason and must not be stifled.”

Pope Leo urged every member of the international community to take up their moral responsibility to “stop the tragedy of war before it becomes an irreparable abyss.” (*Jamaica Gleaner*)





# Sports News



## Antigua and Barbuda National Olympic Committee Celebrates Olympic Day 2025

St. John's, Antigua...June 22nd 2025.... The Antigua and Barbuda National Olympic Committee (ABNOC) is proud to join the global Olympic Movement in celebrating World Olympic Day 2025, under the inspiring theme "Move, Learn, Discover – Together, for a Better World."

Observed annually on June 23rd, Olympic Day marks the founding of the modern Olympic Games and has evolved into a worldwide celebration that unites people across continents through sport and shared values. This year, ABNOC is organizing a series of engaging events aimed at encouraging physical activity, community wellness, and a deeper appreciation for the ideals of Olympism.

The celebrations begin on Monday, June 23rd, when members of the Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association will participate in media appearances across the country. These engagements will spotlight the importance of Olympic Day and highlight the role sport plays in national development, youth empowerment, and community unity.

Activities continue on Saturday, July 5th, with a dynamic Health Fair hosted at the YASCO Sports Complex from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The

fair will bring together various sporting associations and federations for a day of wellness activities, health screenings, educational outreach, and demonstrations. This event is designed to promote holistic health and wellness within the sporting community and the general public.

On Sunday, July 6th, the public is invited to participate in the annual Olympic Day Run/Walk, beginning at the YASCO Sports Complex. Open to individuals of all ages and fitness levels, this event offers a chance for citizens to come together in an active and spirited demonstration of unity, health, and movement. Registration for the run/walk is now open at the ABNOC Office located at the Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Stadium.

Olympic Day, however, is far more than a series of activities. It is a global movement that encourages people to embrace the Olympic values of excellence, friendship, and respect. It also promotes important conversations about how sport can be used to address key social issues such as education, gender equality, environmental protection, and peacebuilding. Around the world, National Olympic Committees mark the occasion with events ranging from school outreach programs and

digital campaigns to inclusive sporting experiences and cultural showcases.

In Antigua and Barbuda, the Olympic Day celebrations reflect a commitment to using sport as a tool for development and empowerment, while inspiring the next generation of athletes and community leaders. The National Olympic Committee encourages everyone, athletes, students, families, and supporters to take part in the events and to use this opportunity to embrace a more active, connected, and values-driven lifestyle.

As the world continues to navigate the challenges of modern life, Olympic Day reminds us of our shared humanity and the power of sport to bring people together locally, regionally, and globally. This June and July, let us come together to move, learn, and discover, building a better, stronger, and more inclusive Antigua and Barbuda through the Olympic spirit.

For more information, contact the Antigua and Barbuda National Olympic Committee or visit our social media pages @abnocofficial or Antigua and Barbuda National Olympic Committee.

**-END-**





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# Sports News



## Attackers get first win in All Saints Community Football League

Attackers claimed their first win in the All Saints Community Football League (ASCFL) on Thursday evening.

After suffering a 3-2 loss to Sea View Farm in their opening encounter, the Attackers rebounded to snatch a one-nil victory against

Overdose at the Mack Pond playing field in All Saints.

Following a goalless first half, Jayden Joseph struck the winner for the Attackers by scoring the only goal of the match in the 40th minute.

It is the second defeat in as many games for Overdose,

who suffered a 3-0 loss to El Hombre in their opening encounter.

Yorkshire picked up their first point in the ASCFL with a goalless draw against Freeman's Village in the second game on Thursday.

Yorkshire were credited with a 3-0 loss by default

after being unable to field a team for their opening encounter against Police.

Freeman's Village snatched a 2-1 victory against Soccerama champions Stoneville in their opening encounter.

## Rising Sun make losing start in defence of Thursday League title



Defending champions Wayne's Electrical Services Rising Sun Spartans have made a losing start in defence of their title in the Antigua Commercial Bank (ACB) Caribbean Parish League Sir Vivian Richards Thursday League.

The Spartans launched their campaign with a 92-run loss against the Jennings Tigers at the Rising Sun playing field on Thursday.

Set 188 to win, Rising Sun Spartans were dismissed for 95. Kerry Mentore

struck 47. Left-arm spinner Glenton Williams grabbed four for 20, and Grayson Cuffy picked up three for 20.

The Jennings Tigers made 187 for seven off their allotted 20 overs. Dimitri Lucas hit 42, Michael Dover scored 29, and Paul Miller made 24.

PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks and New Winthorpes Lions also made winning starts to their campaigns in the Thursday League.

The Blackhawks defeated Police by 82 runs at Ball Beef in Liberta. The Blackhawks made 235 for five off 16 overs after being sent in to bat. Rahkeem Cornwall slammed 97, Joshua Grant struck 50, Kofi James cracked 42, and Hayden Walsh Jr. scored 35. Kenrick Scott took two for 42, and Richie Thomas claimed two for 45.

In reply, Police were restricted to 153 for nine off their 16 overs. Elvis Weaver snapped up four for 18, and Brent Joseph grabbed three for 13.

The New Winthorpes Lions prevailed by 10 wickets against Mahico at Clare Hall. Mahico were dismissed for 101. JQuan Athanaze scored 27. Demari Benta picked up three wickets for six runs, and Kadeem Henry took two for 19.

New Winthorpes Lions achieved victory at 102 without losing a wicket. Kadeem Henry slammed an unbeaten 69, and fellow opener Jermaine Otto hit 27 not out.

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## Blackhawks and Tigers get second wins in ABCA's Super40 Cup



**Players of the PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks cricket team. (File Photo)**

Defending champions PIC Insurance Liberta Blackhawks and the Jennings Tigers made it two wins in as many games in the Antigua and Barbuda Cricket Association's (ABCA) Super40 Cup limited overs championship on Saturday.

The Blackhawks continued their quest for a fourth consecutive title with a six-wicket victory against the All Saints Pythons in their second-round Zone A encounter at Ball Beef in Liberta.

The All Saints Pythons were dismissed for 158 in 31.5 overs. Captain Kenrick Scott slammed 51 off 53 balls, and opener Michael Haynes Dover struck 38 off 34 balls. Kofi James captured five for 47.

The Blackhawks achieved

victory at 160 for four off 22.3 overs. Deran Benta hammered an unbeaten 78 off 68 balls, and Hayden Walsh Jr. hit 28 not out off 21 balls.

The Jennings Tigers crushed Tertiary Institutions & Schools by 120 runs in their Zone B encounter at the Jennings playing field. There was a contribution of 45 extras, including 29 wides. Opener Malique Jacobs hit 42 off 37 balls, and captain Matthew Miller made 30 off 40 balls. Tazio Watson captured four for 26, and captain Xanden Hobson claimed three for 33.

In reply, Tertiary Institutions & Schools were dismissed for 101 in 26.4 overs. Opener Hosea Roberts scored 32, and Hobson made 29 off 19 balls. Grayson Cuffy took four

for 21, and Bassanio Joseph claimed three for 19.

The Pigotts Crushers rebounded from their opening round loss to the Blackhawks with a crushing 140-run victory over Caribbean Union Bank (CUB) Bethesda Golden Eagles in Bethesda.

The Crushers were all out for 217 in 39.5 overs after winning the toss and electing to bat. Opener Shacoy Floyd hit 54; Uri Smith struck 48 off 45 balls; there was a contribution of 36 extras, including 17 wides; and Joshua Grant scored 33. Veteran leg-spinner Anthony "I Roots" Martin snapped up five for 19.

Chasing 218 to win, the Golden Eagles were bundled out for 77 in 23.4 overs. Dion Samuel snatched four

for 16, and Tyree Moore claimed three for 20.

CMW New Winthorpes Lions launched their campaign with a two-wicket win against Empire Nation in their Zone B affair in New Winthorpes.

Empire Nation made 131 all out in 23.4 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat. Damian Lowenfield struck 57 off 48 balls. Demari Benta snapped up five for 24, and Ishmael Peters picked up three for 11.

The New Winthorpes Lions achieved victory at 132 for eight in 30.4 overs. Cameron Pennyfeather hit 34 off 31 balls, and captain Nino Henry struck 30 not out off 23 balls. JQuan Athanaze captured three for 40.

# Sports News



## Young Sri Lankans beat West Indies Academy to lead one-day series



**Ahan Wickramasinghe**

Sri Lanka Emerging Players went 1-0 up in their three-match 50-over series against the West Indies Academy after a five-wicket in the first of three matches at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua on Saturday.

The Academy, after winning the toss and choosing to bat, were dismissed for 237 in 46.2 overs.

Ackem Auguste led the charge for the Academy with 66 off 75 balls including seven fours and a six while Carlon Bowen-Tuckett and Rivaldo Clarke supported well with 55 and 51, respectively.

Off spinner Traveen Matthew and pacer Garuka Sanketh picked up three for 40 from 10 overs and three for 45 from nine overs, respectively.

The tourists then needed just 39.4 overs to reach their tar-

get thanks to excellent knocks from Ahan Wickramasinghe and Nipun Dhananjaya.

Wickramasinghe starred with a brilliant 103 off just 79 balls, including 10 fours and two sixes, while Dhananjaya hit 88 off 125 balls, including seven fours and two sixes, at the top of the order.

Nathan Edward picked up two for 44 from 7.2 overs. The second match is scheduled for the same venue on Tuesday.

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## West Indies defeat South Africa to level T20I series



**Hayley Matthews**

A composed half-century from captain Hayley Matthews led the West Indies Women to a commanding six-wicket win over South Africa Women in the second T20 International at the Three Ws Oval in Cave Hill, Barbados, on Sunday, leveling the three-match series at 1-1.

Chasing a modest target of 114 after South Africa posted 113 for six, Matthews anchored the innings with a sublime unbeaten 63 from 56 balls, guiding her team to victory at 116 for four with four balls to spare.

Matthews struck five fours and a six, and was deservedly named Player of the Match for her all-round performance that also included a tight spell of one for 15 from four overs.

Matthews shared a crucial 41-run opening part-

nership with Qiana Joseph, who struck three boundaries in her 21-ball 17, to lay the foundation for the chase.

Following Joseph's dismissal in the eighth over, the West Indies innings wobbled slightly, slipping from 41 for one to 77 for four after losing debutant Shawnisha Hector (3), Shemaine Campbelle (7), and Chinelle Henry (3) in quick succession.

But Jannillea Glasgow kept her nerve alongside her skipper, contributing a calm 15 not out off 17 deliveries in a match-winning 39-run stand that sealed the victory.

Fittingly, it was Glasgow who struck the winning runs, driving Nadine de Klerk through the offside for four to complete the chase in the final over.

Earlier, South Africa's in-

nings never gained momentum after they were sent in to bat. Afy Fletcher (two for 13) and Karishma Ramharack (two for 25) applied the brakes in the middle overs, combining with Matthews and teenager Jahzara Claxton (one for 27) to restrict the visitors to 113 for six from their 20 overs.

Opener Laura Wolvaardt struck 16 before falling to Claxton, and Tazmin Brits laboured for 14 off 21 balls before becoming one of Fletcher's two victims.

Nadine de Klerk top-scored with 20, while Annerie Dercksen's late 21 not out, gave South Africa a brief surge toward the end. The visitors' inability to build substantial partnerships, with no stand exceeding 29 runs, proved costly.

In contrast, West Indies' bowlers executed with dis-

cipline. Fletcher was especially frugal, conceding just 13 runs in her spell while removing Brits and de Klerk. Matthews' dismissal of the dangerous Marizanne Kapp for a duck also proved a turning point.

South Africa's bowling effort saw Nonkululeko Mlaba lead the way with two for 17, including the scalps of Campbelle and Henry in quick succession.

Ayabonga Khaka (one for 27) and Masabata Klaas (one for 22) also chipped in, but Matthews' calm presence at the crease nullified their efforts.

With the series now tied at one win apiece, both teams will head into the decisive third T20I with everything to play for. The final match takes place at the same venue on Monday (today).

## St. Peter's Academy capture first Primary School Cup title

St. Peter's Academy (SPA) has won the Ministry of Sports Primary School Cup football championship for the first time.

St. Peter's Academy won their inaugural title by snatching a one-nil win against New Winthorpes Primary in the final at the Antigua Recreation Ground (ARG) on Friday.

The tournament's chief marksman, Johnathan Duberry, struck the winner for St. Peter's Academy when he scored the only goal of the match three minutes before the final whistle.

Both teams advanced to the championship decider after securing victories in their respective semi-finals at the same venue.

St. Peter's Academy ousted Parham Primary 4-0. Duberry struck a hat trick, and the other goal was scored by Nikon Dolphin.

New Winthorpes Primary pulled off a 5-1 victory against Pigotts Primary in the other semi-final encounter.

Asana Percival and Elijah Auguiste each scored twice, and Jahmeel Honare converted once for New Winthorpes Primary. Karique Martin scored a consolation goal for Pigotts Primary.

Pigotts Primary hammered Parham Primary 7-1 in the playoff to clinch third place. Karique Martin scored four



**Players of the St. Peter's Academy School football team. (Photos courtesy of SPA)**



**Players of the St. Peter's Academy with their trophies after winning the Under-12 Division of 2025 Villa Lions Easter Classic at the ABFA Technical Center in April.**

goals, and the other three goals were converted by Jermajesty Morris, Jayquan Hunte, and Nicholi George. Keaton Kellman scored a

consolation goal for Parham Primary.

Duberry won the Most Valuable Player (MVP) and Golden Boot (most goals)

awards. He scored a total of 20 goals in 10 matches, including four hat tricks, for St. Peter's Academy.

Jailen Knight of New Winthorpes Primary captured the Best Goalkeeper Award.

Freemans Ville Primary also claimed title honours by capturing the inaugural Girl's Primary School Cup.

Freemans Ville secured the crown by pulling off a 4-1 victory against Five Islands Primary in the final at the ARG on Friday.

Gimel Samuel struck a hat trick, and Jadoya Bowen scored the other goal for Freemans Ville. Karima Toulon scored a consolation goal for Five Islands Primary.